



*Richard A. Kirton, Director.*

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Kitsap County Launches Text-to-9-1-1 Service**

#### **9-1-1: Call if You Can, Text if You Can't**

Kitsap 9-1-1 (CENCOM) announced today that it has begun accepting Text-to-9-1-1 service. Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, AT&T, and Sprint customers in Kitsap County can now send a text message to 9-1-1 in an emergency.

Text to 9-1-1 is a new and critical service. It is intended to benefit people that may not be able to speak due to an emergency such as a home invasion, or abusive partner, as well as individuals that are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities.

"I'm proud that Kitsap 9-1-1 is the first 9-1-1 center in the state to accept text messages," said the agency's director Richard Kirton. "Text-to-9-1-1 is an important tool that will save lives, but placing a voice call is still the most efficient way to reach help. Beginning today, if you have an emergency in Kitsap County, call if you can, text if you can't."

**Text-to-9-1-1 service is not yet available statewide.**

A press conference is scheduled for this afternoon at 2pm at CENCOM (911 Carver St., Bremerton). Text-to-9-1-1 will be demonstrated and staff representatives available for a question and answer session.



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### **A few things you should know about Text-to-9-1-1**

**Text-to-9-1-1 service is not yet available statewide.** If you send a text to 9-1-1 from a wireless carrier or a city/county without Text-to-9-1-1 service, you should receive a message saying that there is no text service to 9-1-1 available at this time.

### **A few things you should know about how Text-to-9-1-1 works currently:**

- A text plan with a participating carrier is required to place a Text-to-9-1-1.
- Photos and videos cannot be sent to 9-1-1 at this time.
- A group text will cause your message to 9-1-1 to not go through. Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 9-1-1.
- Text-to-9-1-1 is not available if you are roaming.
- Interpreters are not available for text at this time, text in English only.
- As with all text messages, messages to or from 9-1-1 may have a delay, may get out of order, or may not be received at all.

### **If Text-to-9-1-1 is available in your area, here are some important tips:**

- Know your location. You will need to tell 9-1-1 where the emergency is located.
- When texting to 9-1-1 for an emergency, the first message should be the location of the emergency (including city) and the type of emergency help needed (police, fire, or medical).
- Keep text messages brief and concise; using full words.
- Stay with your phone, be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker.
- Be aware of auto correct especially when providing a location.
- Stay with your phone, be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker.
- If you are using Text-to-9-1-1 because you are trying to not be heard, don't forget to silence your cell phone.

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